AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A data processing apparatus, comprising: one or a plurality of input portions for inputting a job having a data structure; one or a plurality of output portions; a plurality of compressing/expanding devices which compress data-to-be-outputted included in **[[a]]** the job inputted from any one of said input portions and expand the compressed data-to-be-outputted; a job discrimination portion which discriminates, from the data structure of the job, whether the job inputted from any one of said input portions is not required to be outputted without delay; and a controller which controls operation assignment of said plurality of compressing/expanding devices depending on a discrimination result of said job discrimination portion and activates assigned compressing/expanding devices for the job.

2. (Original) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein said any one of output portions is a printer portion, and wherein the job not required to be outputted without delay is a store print job including a confidential print job and an initially-conduct-first-set-of-print job.

3. (Original) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein said any one of output portions is a printer portion, and wherein the job not required

to be outputted without delay is a facsimile-receive job or an internet-facsimile-receive job to be inputted from outside.

4. (Original) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein, in cases where said job discrimination portion discriminates that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, said controller changes the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices so as to expedite initiation of a subsequent job, and wherein, in cases where said job discrimination portion discriminates that the job is required to be outputted without delay, said controller changes the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices so as to enable early outputting of the job.

5. (Original) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein, in cases where said discrimination portion discriminates that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, said controller assigns some of said plurality of compressing/expanding devices so as not to process the job, and wherein, in cases where said discrimination portion discriminates that the job is required to be outputted without delay, said controller assigns all of said plurality of compressing/expanding so as to process the job.

6. (Previously Presented) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein, in cases where said job discrimination portion discriminates that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, said controller further changes the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices depending on the

type of the job.

7. (Previously Presented) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein, in cases where a subsequent job is inputted from another input portion during the processing of the current job, said controller activates some of compressing/expanding devices set to be a standby state to execute compression processing of the subsequent job.

8. (Original) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 6, wherein, in cases where the job not required to be outputted without delay is a confidential print job, said controller sets more compressing/expanding devices than those required for another job not required to be outputted without delay to be a standby state.

9. (Withdrawn) A data processing method, comprising: discriminating whether an inputted job is not required to be outputted without delay; controlling operation assignment of compressing/expanding devices which compress data-to-be-outputted included in the inputted job and expand the compressed data-to-be-outputted depending on the discrimination result; and activating assigned compressing/expanding devices for the inputted job.

10. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 9, wherein the job not required to be outputted without delay is a store print job including a confidential print job and an initially-conduct-first-set-of-print job.

11. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 9, wherein the job not required to be outputted without delay is a facsimile-receive job or an internet-facsimile-receive job to be inputted from outside.

12. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 9, wherein, in cases where it is discriminated that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, the operation assignment of compressing/expanding devices is changed so as to expedite initiation of a subsequent job, and wherein, in cases where it is discriminated that the job is required to be outputted without delay, the operation assignment of the compressing/expanding devices is changed so as to enable early outputting of the job to be outputted without delay.

13. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 9, wherein, in cases where it is discriminated that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, some of said plurality of compressing/expanding devices are assigned so as not to be used for the processing of the job not required to be outputted without delay, and wherein, in cases where it is discriminated that the job is required to be outputted without delay, all of said compressing/expanding devices are assigned so as to process the job required to be outputted without delay.

14. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 12, wherein, in cases where it is discriminated that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices is

changed depending on the type of the job.

15. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 12, wherein, in cases where a subsequent job is inputted during the processing of a current job, some of compressing/expanding devices assigned to a standby state execute the subsequent job.

16. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 14, wherein, in cases where the job not required to be outputted without delay is a confidential print job, more compressing/expanding devices than those required for another job not required to be outputted without delay are set to be a standby state.

17. (Withdrawn) An image forming apparatus, comprising: a scanner which outputs an original image converted into electric data by a photoelectric transfer element; an input port which receives a print job from an external device including a computer or a facsimile machine; an input adjusting portion which receives a scanned image job outputted from said scanner and the print job inputted into said input portion; a plurality of compressing/expanding devices which compress data-to-be-outputted included in a job inputted from said input adjusting portion and expand compressed data-to-be-outputted; a storage which stores the compressed data-to-be-outputted; a discrimination portion which discriminates whether the job inputted into said input adjusting portion is required to be outputted without delay or not required to be outputted without delay; a controller which controls operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices depending on a discrimination

result of said discrimination portion and activates assigned compressing/expanding devices for the job; and a printer which prints out print data of each job expanded by said compressing/expanding devices on a sheet.

18. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus as recited in claim 17, wherein the job not required to be outputted without delay is a store print job including a confidential print job and an initially-conduct-first-set-of-print job inputted into said input portion.

19. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus as recited in claim 17, wherein the job not required to be outputted without delay is a facsimile-receive job or an internet-facsimile-receive job inputted from outside.

20. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus as recited in claim 17, wherein, in cases where said discrimination portion discriminates that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, said controller changes the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices so as to expedite initiation of a subsequent job, and wherein, in cases where said discrimination portion discriminates that the job is required to be outputted without delay, said controller changes the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices so as to enable early outputting of the job to be outputted without delay.

21. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus data as recited in claim 17, wherein, in cases where said discrimination portion discriminates that the job is not

required to be outputted without delay, said controller assigns some of said plurality of compressing/expanding devices so as not to process the job, and wherein, in cases where said discrimination portion discriminates that the job is required to be outputted without delay, said controller assigns all of said plurality of compressing/expanding devices so as to process the job required to be outputted without delay.

22. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus as recited in claim 20, wherein, in cases where said discrimination portion discriminates that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, said controller changes the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices depending on the type of the job.

23. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus as recited in claim 20, wherein, in cases where a subsequent job is inputted during the processing of a current job, said controller activates some of said plurality of compressing/expanding devices set to be a standby state so as to execute compression processing of the subsequent job.

24. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus as recited in claim 22, wherein, in cases where the job not required to be outputted without delay is a confidential print job, said controller sets more compressing/expanding devices than those required for another job not required to be outputted without delay to be a standby state.

25. (Previously Presented) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein, in cases where said job discrimination portion discriminates that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, said controller further changes the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices depending on the type of the job.

26. (Previously Presented) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein, in cases where a subsequent job is inputted from another input portion during the processing of the current job, said controller activates some of compressing/expanding devices set to be a standby state to execute compression processing of the subsequent job.

27. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 13, wherein, in cases where it is discriminated that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices is changed depending on the type of the job.

28. (Withdrawn) The data processing method as recited in claim 13, wherein, in cases where a subsequent job is inputted during the processing of a current job, some of compressing/expanding devices assigned to a standby state execute the subsequent job.

29. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus as recited in claim 21,

wherein, in cases where said discrimination portion discriminates that the job is not required to be outputted without delay, said controller changes the operation assignment of said compressing/expanding devices depending on the type of the job.

30. (Withdrawn) The image forming apparatus as recited in claim 21, wherein, in cases where a subsequent job is inputted during the processing of a current job, said controller activates some of said plurality of compressing/expanding devices set to be a standby state so as to execute compression processing of the subsequent job.

31. (Previously Presented) The data processing apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein said delay comprises a user-initiated delay.